

Abstract:

The purpose of this BIM-Wiki entry is to walkthrough the process of exporting an image from any graphics program (such as Revit, AutoCAD, or Sketchup), and importing it into a PowerPoint file without unnecessary background information (like a grey background). The process involves the use of Photoshop for editing the exported images. This is very helpful for editing your images for better graphical clarity in presentations.

I will be using an existing Sketchup model for this Wiki post.

Sidenote: This workflow can apply to any program you need to export an image.

Step 1:

Open your model in Sketchup (or whatever program you are using). Now orient the model in the way you would like to present it on your presentation slide.

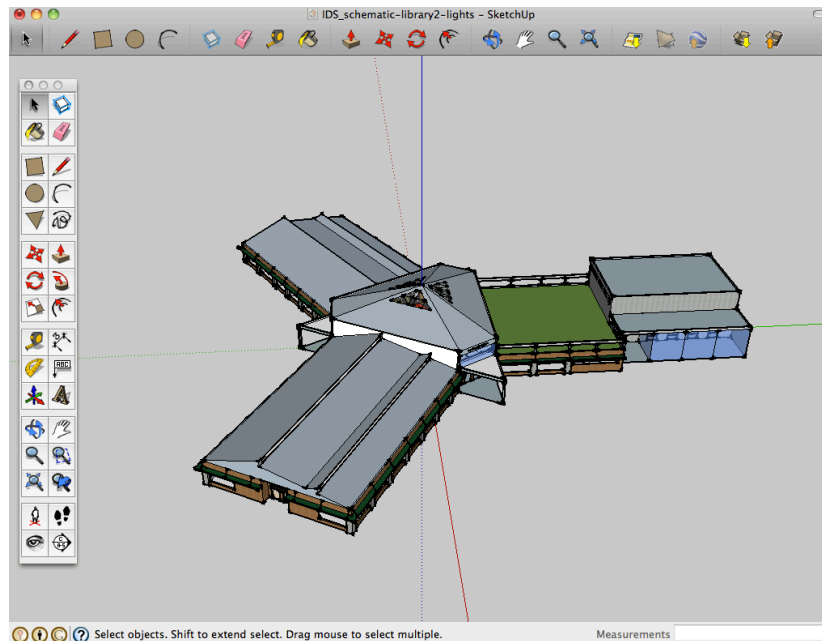


Figure 1: Original Sketchup Model

There are now multiple ways to create an image of your model. You can either: print-screen, use a snipping tool, or export a 2D Image (depending on the program you are using). If you are comfortable using the first two export methods, continue to step 2. I recommend using the “export a 2D image” method because it will remove unwanted axis/grid lines.

To export a 2D graphic in Sketchup, do the following:

1. File > Export > 2D Graphic... > *save your file

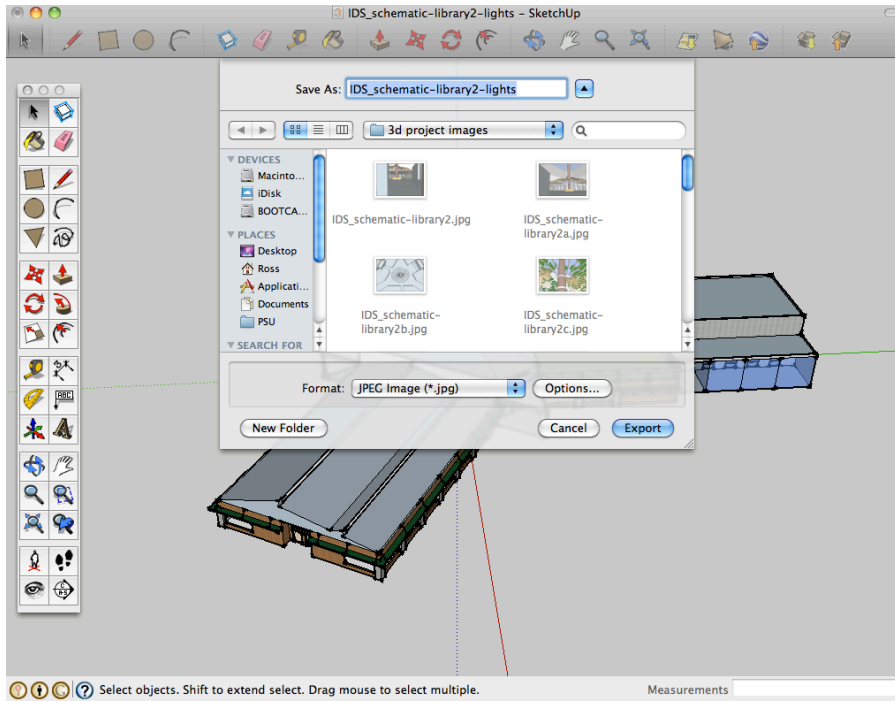


Figure 2: Export 2D Graphic Dialogue Box

Sidenote: I prefer to export as a .jpg file, but any format should work as long as you can open it in Photoshop

Step 2:

Open your newly saved image file in Photoshop (File > Open > *select your file). You may now edit your image in Photoshop.

Sidenote: This is a good time to adjust contrast, brightness, colors, etc. You can also apply Photoshop filters that can make the image more aesthetically appealing.

For the purposes of this Wiki, I will simply remove the grey background that is associated with the 2D image export.

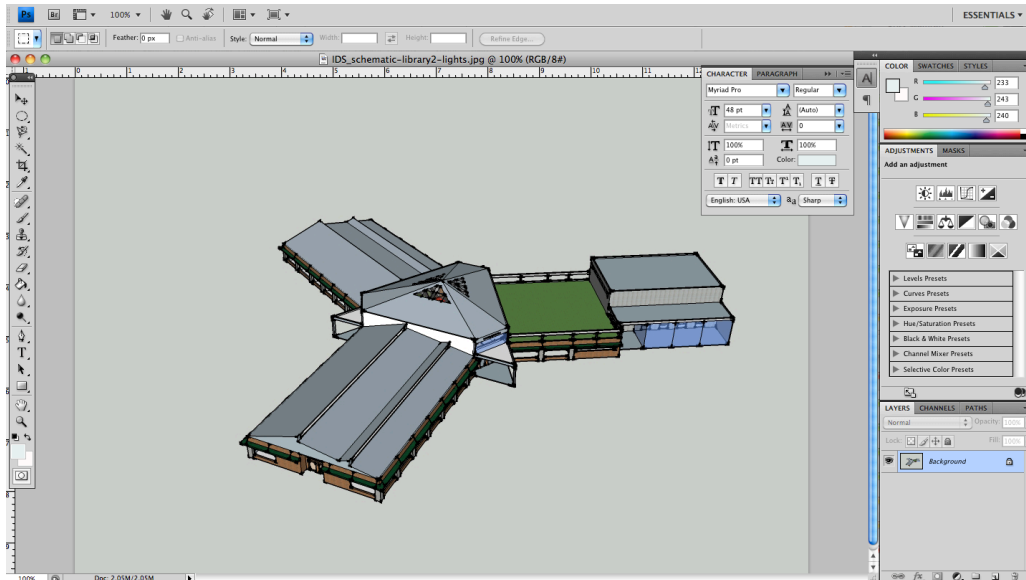


Figure 3: Imported 2D graphic image in Photoshop

There are multiple ways to remove the grey background. I prefer the following:

1. Use the magic wand tool and click on the grey background.
2. Go to: Select > Inverse, to select only your model
3. Edit > Copy
4. File > New (to create a new file)
 - a. IMPORTANT: Make sure you select “Background contents: Transparent” In order to remove any type of background.
 - b. Also select: “Preset: clipboard” To ensure your new file is the size of your copied image.
5. In your new file go to: Edit > Paste

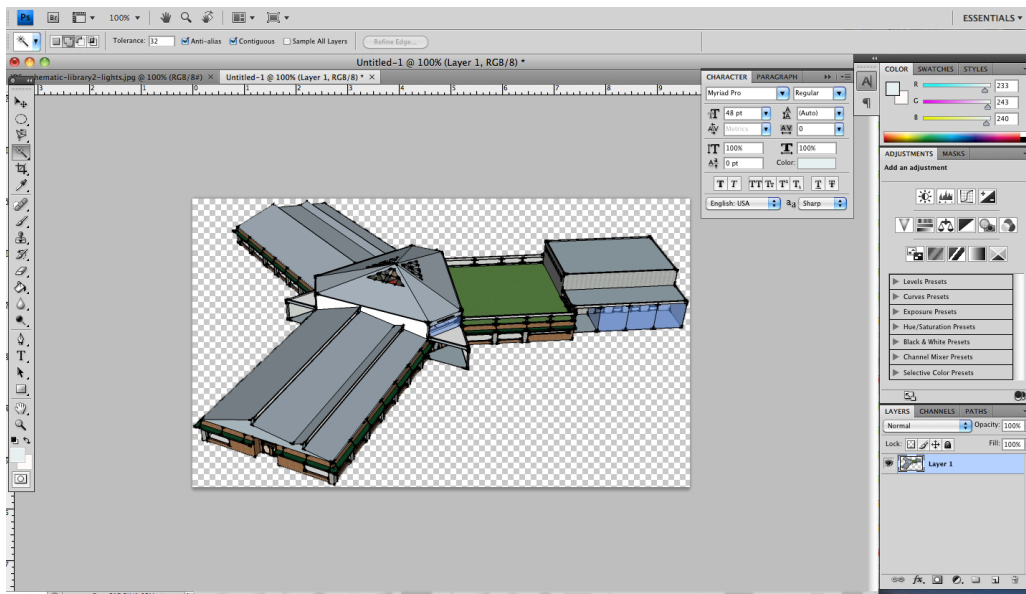


Figure 4: Newly created Photoshop file without grey background

Sidenote: Notice the checkerboard pattern on the new file. This means there is no background associated with your image.

File > Save as > *Save your file as a **.PNG** file (this is very important to maintain the transparent background)

Step 3:

Now, simply open up your Powerpoint presentation (or create a new one), and your image will import without a background:

1. Insert > Picture... > *select your image

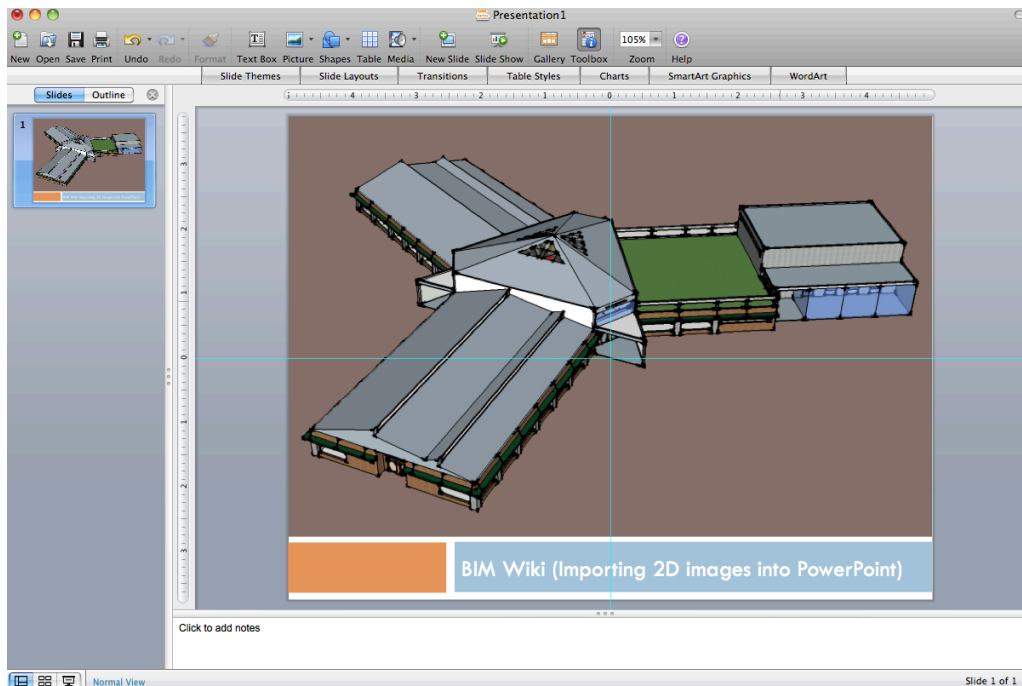


Figure 5: 2D image imported into PowerPoint (without background)